

OBSERVER'S LIFE MORE THAN TOUR OF CLOUDS

The observation planes are supposed to fly over the enemy's lines, sighting battery emplacements, noting troop concentrations, registering artillery fire and photographing the land beneath until the entire enemy area for 40 miles around is as visible to the high command as if it could be swept day and night by a single, gigantic, all-powerful telescope.

They are not supposed to fight. That is the first rule in their text book. That is the lesson drilled over and over at the training schools. Unless they are cornered, they are not supposed to fight. They are not supposed to fight. They are not supposed to fight.

Well, their planes are scarred from a hundred battles, a dozen more of them have been brought down. Hum and two of them—one a pilot and one an observer, Lieut. William F. Erwin of Chicago and Lieut. Leonard Hammond of San Francisco—are aces.

This is partly because the work of the observation planes is far more than that of the ordinary fighter. While America and all her Army sat spellbound watching the brilliant combats of the chase pilots, while young, lone hawks like the late Lieut. Luke tried meteorically to fly the Fonck in a single month, while Captain Edgar Rickabaugh—the one that used to be General Pershing's chauffeur—sent his own score skyrocketing into the twenties, the work of the observation planes went on night and day, venturesome, dangerous, exciting beyond all words to tell—but unchronicled.

"Just an Observer"

There is not only the notion that the observation planes lead a comparatively genteel and humdrum existence, but that the observers themselves are somewhat sheltered souls who know little of the thrill of the chase. Of the men who are on their backs, a single silver wing instead of the two, the wisecrack of the front is wont to say: "Ho, he's just an observer," as who should say: "Ho, he's just a lieutenant in the Home Guard of South Bend, Indiana." And that—considering the fact that the life of an observer is more painfully insecure than the life of an observation pilot—is just one of the little jokes of the Air Service.

Then, too, there has been perceptible this fall a growing disposition among the Allied observation pilots not merely to take photographs but to take chances. There was a restive, not to say mutinous, tendency not merely to engage in a combat on the slightest provocation, but to engage in several combats without any provocation whatever. It is true that a big Salmons or Liberty biplane, when taken to maneuver against a nimble and malevolent German plane, is a little like a cow in mortal combat with a hornet, but it is also true that such a biplane has guns both fore and aft, which makes her, ship for ship, rather the more formidable craft. When some of our scout or fighter planes are like little boys who have been told by their aunt, their old maid aunt, to come straight home from school without loitering or getting into any arguments with the rough boys on the street corners, but who arrive home two hours late with a torn coat, a bloody nose, a black eye and a look of complete and ineffable content.

Credited With Eight

Lieut. Erwin, for example, had, by the end of October, been credited officially with eight German planes, though he had brought down one more than that. He must be admitted that, in seven of those eight combats, he and the observer with him were not attacked by the Germans, but deliberately picked the fights themselves and won them. It must also be admitted that not only Lieut. Erwin, but both of the observers who have shared his adventures, Lieuts. A. E. Easterbrook and

Byrne D. Bancroft, are aces. So it does look as though the powers that be were not very angry with him. Lieut. Erwin, who used to be a budding concert pianist, a Godwits pupil with a studio in Chicago, is the ace of aces among the observation pilots, the Rickenbacker of the air scouts. He is short, slim, wiry, agile and not more than 22. One of his liveliest exploits occurred at St. Mihiel when he and Lieut. Bancroft, scouting overhead in front of the rapidly advancing lines, spotted a German battery in the process of a discreet withdrawal at a time when our own rampaging Infantry was only a half a kilometer away.

"The doughboys will be here in ten minutes," the pilot called through his speaking tube. "Let's hold these bums for them. What do you say?"

They swooped low. The two officers of the battery were just mounting their horses for a speedy and comfortable retreat, leaving their men to get away on foot as best they could. The German killed one of those officers and shot the other's horse from under him. Then they turned loose from their three guns, such a downpour of destruction that, after a few moments of utter demoralization, the men of the battery took to their dugouts and did not come out until our Infantry swarmed through the woods and laid hands on them.

Josephine the Fourth

Of course, Lieut. Erwin's list of victories scarcely furnished his list of combats. The stories of these are, in fact, gained from the planes themselves. His present ship—the Josephine—is his fourth. His first was brought down early last August by the fire from an American doughboy who had not learned the insignia and who, even as he fired, was doubtless wondering audibly why the back there weren't no American planes around.

His third ship bore the marks of 140 bullets before it was salvaged, many of the scars healed over with little patches of linen, each patch bearing an iron cross and the date when the wound was inflicted. One of his souvenirs, which he now carries with him in every flight, is the parachute with which one of his bodies made a graceful landing within our lines, waving airily and perhaps appealingly to his victor as he floated by.

Another less happy souvenir is wrapped in the folds of a linen square cut from the fuselage of that third machine. On that bit of linen is painted the American flag, insignia of the squadron, the stripes now stained with blood, spilled there the afternoon Lieut. Erwin flew back to the field and taxied straight to the infirmary, his ship all warped and torn, his observer dead in the cockpit behind.

Often such combats were fought and won so many miles—30 or 40, perhaps—within "Germany" that no friendly eye ever saw them. The only witnesses were those waiting at the hangars when the fighting planes came coolly back. For example, on Halloween, after a lively celebration of that anniversary as history records, Lieut. Dogan H. Arthur and Howard T. Fleeson came wobbling back through the air to the home field.

Lieut. Arthur's face was streaked where a bullet had whizzed by too close for comfort. His ship, "Old Carolina II," was a wreck. The panels and fuselage were riddled, the elevator axis was all but shot in two, the struts were warped all out of position, the very stream wires were bursting from the heads. Yet the only report filed at group headquarters was the following laconic note:

"Photographic protection. Attacked near Buzancy at 4:20 p. m. by 18 Fokkers. Brought down two. Request confirmation."

"That same evening, three of our

planes, returning to another field from a long distance picture taking expedition, were returning discreetly with some 150 exposures when 30 enemy planes picked them up while they were still far from their own lines. There was a hot pursuit, a running fight that did not slacken until the fugitive three, having shot down two of their opponents, had reached St. Menchould. All our planes returned, somewhat the worse for wear, it is true, and with a wounded pilot in one cockpit. But they got back. And what is more, of the 150 exposures 148 proved good pictures.

For the information, whether gained by the eye or by the camera, must at all costs be brought back. Fight or no fight, that is the law of the reconnaissance planes. The chase pilot, who, though he himself is brought down, brings down two or three of his opponents. The observation pilot who, though he brings down nine German planes, is himself brought down, has lost.

A Miracle of Charity

The accuracy, the wealth of detail and the obvious value of the pictures taken by the winged photographers is a constant marvel and delight. You can see half obliterated footpaths and dugout stairs in a print taken from a height of 3,000 meters. A new battery position can be spotted within a few hours after its emplacement. The print will show clearly the newly worn paths, the scorched trees and that faint discoloration which indicates the appearance of camouflage where none had been when last the place was photographed.

Such pictures can be—and are—delivered within six hours after they are taken to the headquarters of the division likely to be interested. For, of course, the messenger who delivers the prints from the dark room also takes the air route.

An approaching enemy attack is reflected through the delicate lens of a camera hovering 5,000 meters overhead, which is why the enemy planes attack it in great numbers. That print shows a sudden increase of trains on the siding at the big railroad opposite, the next serves notice that there are many new tents in the waiting field hospitals behind the enemy lines.

A good airplane photograph of Metz-Sablon, for instance, will tell just how many cars are within its area, just which ones the bombers detailed the night before. When guns, big guns opened up late last month on the distant railway shuttle linking Metz with Longuyon, the flying cameras photographed the target before and after the first shots and submitted the prints to the gunners so that they might correct their fire accordingly.

Of course, the speed of such reconnaissance is important. A photographic

mission that set off at dawn on October 30 returned at noon with 200 pictures. By 10 o'clock that night, advanced prints of each negative had been sent to First Army headquarters; by noon the next day 17,000 prints had been made and started on their rounds. One squadron, after five months of this work, has 3,000 pictures and 120,000 prints to its credit.

It should be remembered that for all the rain and blinding fog which soaked and cloaked the Argonne valleys throughout the greater part of October, the day went by without its reconnaissance flights and that scarcely a mission came back with its precious photographs without having to make a running fight for it.

Stirring are the stories the mechanics tell as they groom the ships at night in the dim lit hangars, patching them up, oiling them and getting them ready for the work that awaits them at dawn.

They tell of the order that came to locate an Infantry line when all wires were down and all runners baffled—an order that came by telephone so late in the day that the group commander would ask no one to take the mission, but himself set forth at dusk, with only occasional flares his compass and his altimeter to guide him. He had to fly so low that his plane fairly scraped the treetops. But he brought back the tidings and division had them an hour after the first call for help.

They tell, too, of the two planes that were attacked by six enemy ships soon after crossing the lines. One came back with 68 machine gun bullets in the panels and the fuselage, the observer's hand and foot shot away, the pilot's coat pierced by four bullets.

Pilot Knocked Unconscious

In the course of that same fight, the pilot of the other machine was knocked unconscious. When he came to, he was pointing straight downward with the motor full on and his aneroid showed he had fallen four thousand meters out of control. Somehow he righted himself in time and flew back to the aerodrome. There were two "creases" in his head.

Téléphone 12-20
Longines
Watches
11, Bd des Italiens
Repairs

J. COQUILLOT
BOOT MAKER
Tunisher to King of Spain
75, Av. des Champs-Élysées, Paris.
Paris and London. Tel. 667-08.

Send the word—
over Home
that you like—
BISHOP'S
Calarab Figbuds
The Fig Confection
from California—
Bishop's Confectionery—LOS ANGELES, CAL.

Telephone Central 96 16 **BARCLAY** 18 & 20
Ave. de l'Opéra
PARIS
TAILOR—OUTFITTER
LATEST SUGGESTIONS FOR OFFICERS' CLOTHING
SPECIAL MILITARY CATALOGUE SENT POST FREE

MILITARY BAND INSTRUMENTS
Over 500 Military Bands of the U.S.A. and Allied Armies recently equipped.
BESSON & CO., LTD.
198 Euston Road, LONDON, England
Telephone No. Central 6,377

A. E. F.
An Elegant Franchise for All Expert Fighters of the American Expeditionary Force.
Ask at the Canteen for
OWL
white OWL
TWO DEFENDABLE CIGARETTES
FRIENDS OF THE ARMY AND NAVY SINCE 1876
General Cigar Company, Inc.
New York



"Guard duty" back here in the States mostly concerns the Almighty Dough.

We notice it particularly because so many men who used to wink at the luxury of high priced tailors now come to us. The saving they make adds to their investments in W.S.S.

The big idea is to enlist everybody in a "company of savers" to back up a "company of soldiers."

ROGERS FEET COMPANY
Broadway at 13th St.
Broadway at 14th St.
Broadway at 15th St.
Broadway at 16th St.
Broadway at 17th St.
Broadway at 18th St.
Broadway at 19th St.
Broadway at 20th St.
Broadway at 21st St.
Broadway at 22nd St.
Broadway at 23rd St.
Broadway at 24th St.
Broadway at 25th St.
Broadway at 26th St.
Broadway at 27th St.
Broadway at 28th St.
Broadway at 29th St.
Broadway at 30th St.
Broadway at 31st St.
Broadway at 32nd St.
Broadway at 33rd St.
Broadway at 34th St.
Broadway at 35th St.
Broadway at 36th St.
Broadway at 37th St.
Broadway at 38th St.
Broadway at 39th St.
Broadway at 40th St.
Broadway at 41st St.
Broadway at 42nd St.
Broadway at 43rd St.
Broadway at 44th St.
Broadway at 45th St.
Broadway at 46th St.
Broadway at 47th St.
Broadway at 48th St.
Broadway at 49th St.
Broadway at 50th St.

Composed at the Printing Office of the Continental "Star" and "Stripes", 11, Bd des Italiens, Paris.

GRANDE MAISON de BLANC

LONDON PARIS CANNES
No Branch in New York
GENTLEMEN'S DEPARTMENT, HOSIERY, Ladies' Lingerie
LOUVET BROS., Prop. **O. BOYER, Manager**

AMERICAN MILITARY and NAVAL FORCES

CREDIT LYONNAIS

Head Office: LYONS
Central Office: PARIS, 19 Boulevard des Italiens

BANKING BUSINESS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION WITH ENGLISH-SPEAKING STAFF
EVERY FACILITY FOR FOREIGNERS

Branches in all principal French towns, amongst others the following:
Amiens, Angers, Angoulême, Bar-le-Duc, Bayonne, Belfort, Besançon, Blois, Bordeaux, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Brest, Caen, Calais, Cannes, Cette, Chaumont, Dieppe, Dijon, Dunkirk, Epinal, Evreux, La Rochelle, Limoges, Marseilles, Nancy, Nantes, Nice, Orleans, Rennes, Rochefort, Rouen, Saint-Dizier, Saint-Malo, Toulon, Tours, Trouville, Troyes, Vannes, Versailles, Vitry-le-François, Bourges, Clermont-Ferrand, Issoudun, Nevers, Saint-Raphaël, Vézère.

COLEO
A Colgate soap made entirely of vegetable oils

AFTER reveille and before taps a quick lathering soap is needed. Such soap is Coleo—a service soap—which lathers freely even in hard water.

Its guarantee to be made entirely of vegetable oils means that besides cleansing thoroughly and rinsing off quickly, Coleo leaves the skin smooth and soft.

There is no waste with Coleo. The last bit of soap can be pressed on to a new cake. Real thrift.

COLEO

WHERE LEAVES GROW

For the first time in four years the famous casino at Aix-les-Bains, in the Savoy leave area, is going to be heated throughout the winter. "The fact that the freezing days of last February are not to be repeated is due to the expert assistance of two ex-boilermakers, now with the A. E. F."

The way it happened was this: The Y. M. C. A. authorities, who run the casino, sent to Paris for one of their men who is supposed to be an expert on boilers. He got down to Aix, looked over the job, and allowed that it could be done, but that he would have to have help. Fixing boilers had been at the top of his mind for four years, so he combed the arrondissement of Chambéry for French workers. None were to be found.

One day as he was sitting disconsolate in a corner of one of the casino's ample lounging rooms, two Yanks plunked themselves down beside him and started to chew the fat with him. He chewed back, and then quite inadvertently, asked them what they did in the States before they joined the Army.

"I was a boilermaker," said one.

"Me, too," piped up the other.

The boiler expert got right after the commandant of the leave area, induced him to wire to the two Yanks' commanding officers beseeching an extension of their leaves (which were about up), and introduced them both to the refractory heating apparatus. For ten hours a day the three tackled the problem, coming up only for the air and the dance at night. By the time the two ex-boilermakers' extended leaves were over they were 14 days' holiday to the good, and the casino was assured of its winter heating.

There is a motherly yet boyish person on the working staff at Aix who goes by various names. Most of the Yanks call her "Mother" or "Ma." Others jocularly term her The Anxious Old Lady of Aix, or "The Lady with the Fiddle" for the ample pockets of her blue coat are always filled with quinine and aspirin tablets with which to ward off the "shakes" or incipient colds.

"The Floorwalker" is another of her titles, for she is always around directing, suggesting, pointing.

Every time a Yank's leave is up, and he comes—as they all do—to say goodbye to her, she says:

"Kill one German, at least, for me—for me particularly. That's all I ask. Goodbye and good luck!"

She gave that cheery farewell some months ago to a certain old sergeant of the regulars, a Croix de Guerre and D. S. C. man, one of the first to be thus honored in the history of the A. E. F. Laughingly, he promised to do so, and went his way.

The other day "Mother" got a bulky package, endorsed as coming from Sergeant A. E. F., from somewhere up front. On opening it, a veritable cascade of German buttons poured forth. In it was a note which ran about as follows:

"Dear Madam: You asked me to get

a German for you. I did. Here are his buttons to prove it. He was a captain. Yours truly, etc. William N."

Two gobs blew into Aix the other day and created quite a sensation. The nearest to a seafaring man that had been seen there up to then had been a Marine, and his name was legion. The gobs were a novelty, the first on record, and the Yank permissionnaires began to wonder if they were going to be cut out. Not so; the sailor-men, it turns out, were there on their own, paying their own way on their own leave, and not on the semi-duty status, with hotel bills paid, that the Yanks are on when they go there. So far there has been no official move, or intimation of one, to make Aix a leave area for the Navy in the same sense that it is one for the Army.

"It's funny," mused one of the hotel proprietors at Aix, "what some of your Americans expect to find down here. They seem to think that they've got to sleep out in the open, so they bring their shelter tents; they expect to stand in line for hot food, so they bring their mess kits; they have ideas of guard duty, so they bring their side arms."

"They ask us what time reveille is, and when we tell them that there is no such thing here, and that they can sleep as late as they want to, getting their breakfast at any time at the casino canteen, they seem astounded. It really takes two or three days of sleeping in regular beds, eating regular food off regular plates that they do not have to wash, to get them used to things here."

This is another yarn about "Mother," or "The Lady Floorwalker." It is one that she tells herself, so it is fair game to print it.

Two ancient and weather-beaten regulars were sitting about one day rather down in the mouth. With a woman's instinct, she sized up their trouble. In a word, "Mother," she said, "I'll proffer a loan; gratefully, after much hesitation, they accepted."

"Now, I don't care what you do with it or where you spend it," she told them, laughingly, "for that's none of my business. Only be sure to make it last for I haven't any more."

That was in the morning. They thanked her and departed. That evening they sought her out, their faces fairly lit by wide grins of gleaming joy.

"Here's your money, Mother," they told her, handing out large wads of five and ten franc notes. "There's all of it. Thank you ever so much."

"Mother gasped. "Where on earth—," she began.

"That's all right," the two beamed at her. "The game was a great success."

The next morning a huge bunch of flowers, from two unknown donors, graced Mother's breakfast table. Six large bunches, from the same two donors, graced it every morning for the rest of the week.

The game must have been quite a success.

Factories at CAIRO, EGYPT, NEW YORK, U.S.A., MONTREAL, CANADA.

M. MELACHRINO & CO. INC.

THE LARGEST MANUFACTURERS OF THE BEST EGYPTIAN CIGARETTES NEW YORK

To Our Boys Overseas:—

Wherever you go, you'll find an old friend in most tobacco shops and every canteen—**MELACHRINO Cigarettes.**

Let this mellow, fragrant cigarette do its bit by solacing and comforting you in your strenuous duties.

Your countrymen traveling in foreign lands have for years found great comfort in the fact that **MELACHRINOS** were on sale where they went.

We will do our best to see that you are supplied with **MELACHRINOS** wherever duty calls you.

Faithfully yours
M. Melachrino & Co. Inc.

Melachrino
The Cigarette Elect of Allied Nations